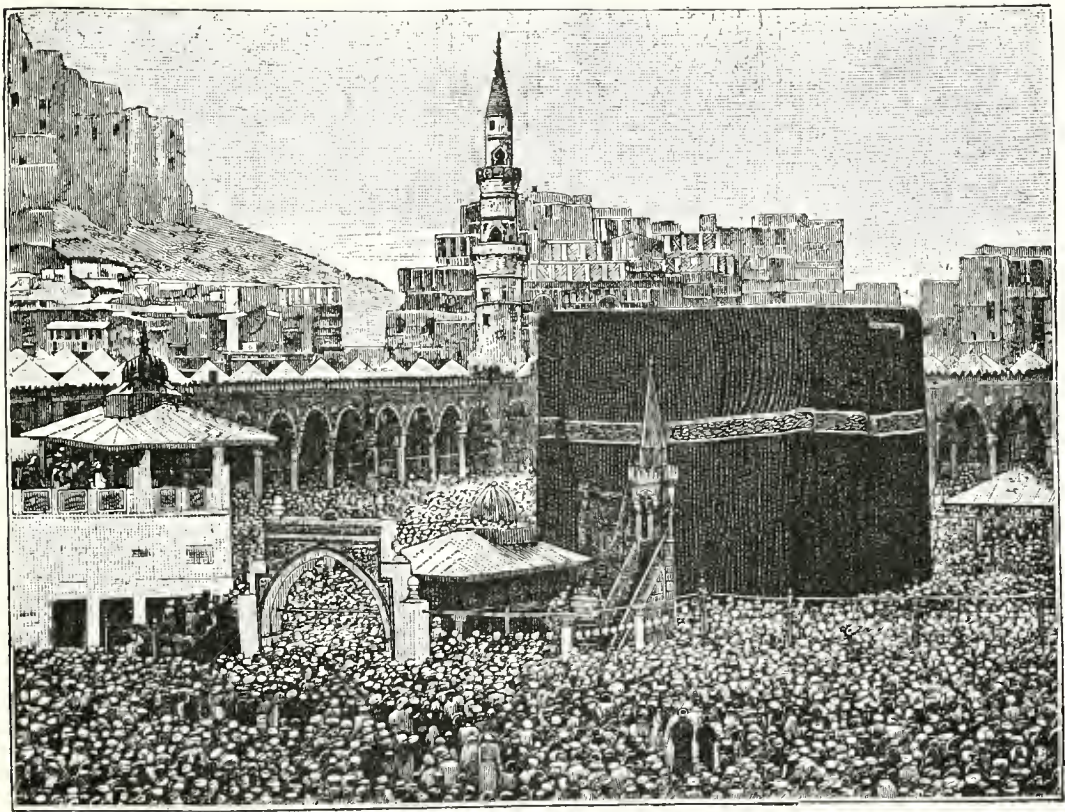


## THE CAABA.

BY THE EDITOR.

ISLAM, which means surrender, viz., to God, is the strictest monotheism; we commonly call it Mohammedanism, but pious Mussulmans shrink from the idea of designating their religion after

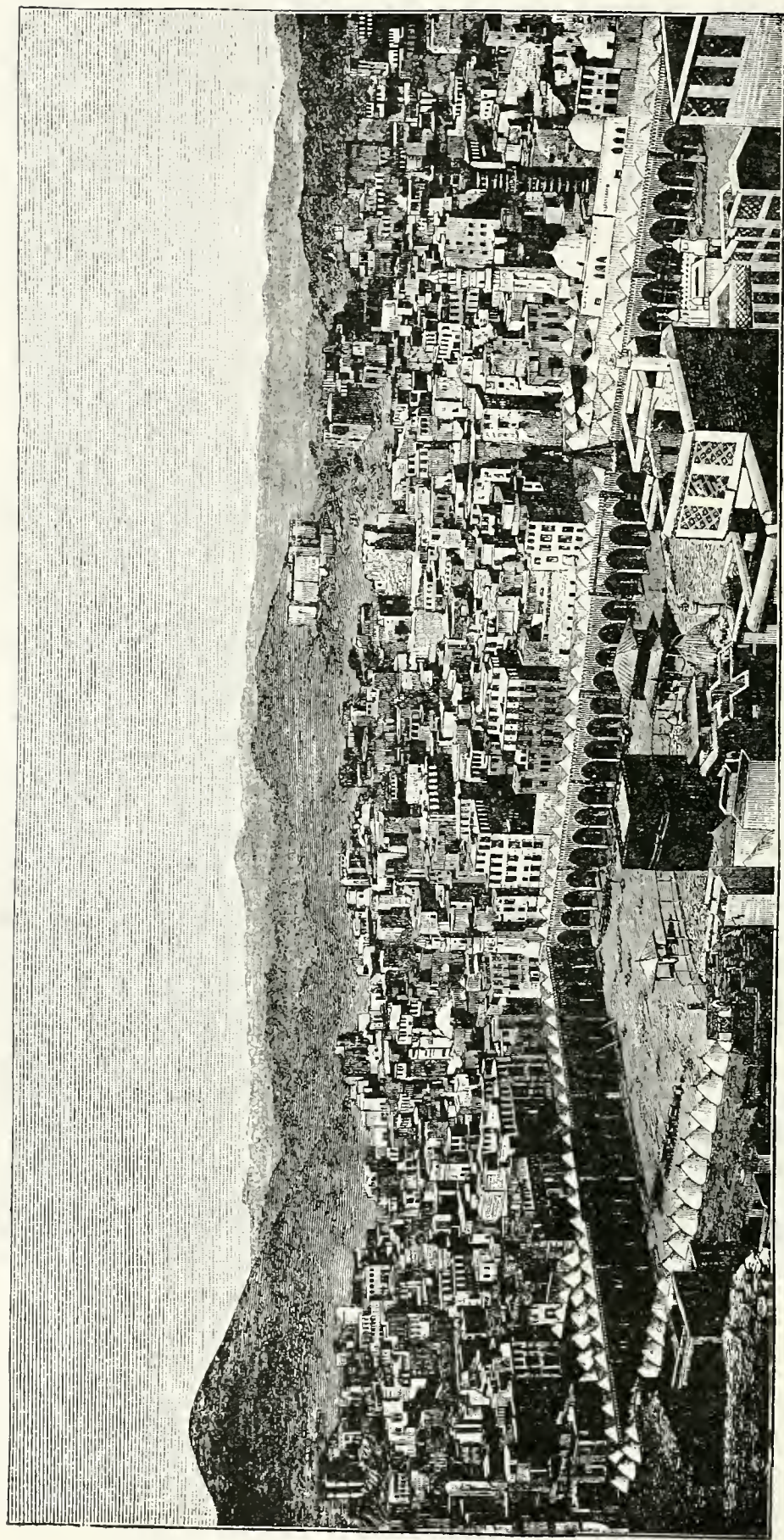


THE CAABA SURROUNDED BY PILGRIMS.

After Le Bon, *La civilisation des Arabes*, p. 119. Cf. Lenormant, *L'histoire de l'Orient*, Vol. VI., p. 447.

the name of a man. The object of their devotion is Allah, who is neither begetter nor begotten, but the eternal and omnipotent God. Mohammed is the prophet of Allah, and the religion of Mohammed's adherents ought to be called Islam.





VIEW OF MECCA WITH THE CAABA.

After Dr. Le Bon, *La civilisation des Arabes*, p. 117 (Paris, Didot). Cf. Lenormant, *L'histoire de l'Orient*, Vol. VI., p. 446.

Mohammed has never been painted or portrayed in any way by any Moslem artist, and all pictures of him that exist are made by giaours who either have no knowledge of the principles of Islam, or purposely ignore them; for the Mussulmans have inherited the Semitic hatred of idols, and obey literally the rule of the Mosaic Law that forbids the making of likenesses or images. Even nowadays it is dangerous for foreign artists to paint pious Mohammedans, and travellers are warned not to take photographs of natives in the Orient, because they might meet with unpleasant experiences.

Although Mohammed succeeded in forcing his religion on his people only after great struggle, Islam, that is the typically Arabic monotheism, is nevertheless the natural outcome of the religious development of Arabia. The change had to come sooner or later, and Mohammed made himself the prophet of an inevitable movement which, in spite of its radical denunciations of idolatry even in its mildest forms, retained many features of the ancient pagan traditions. The most noteworthy of these is a remnant of Sabaism the worship shown to the Caaba, which is a meteorite of enormous size lying in the holy city of Mecca. It is shrouded from sight by a veil, and is surrounded by a quadrangle after the style of a Mohammedan mosque. One of our illustrations shows the city of Mecca with the Caaba in its midst, while the other shows the Caaba at the time of its annual festival, surrounded by pilgrims.

The incongruence of this relic of ancient Sabaism is of course not at all felt by any pious Mussulman. It is an interesting example of the fact that old traditions cling to people and ancient ceremonies are observed, even though their sense becomes lost in the progress of the age and through a reformation of the underlying religious ideas.